

In the Claims:

In accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.121, please enter the following amended claims.

5. (Amended) A user information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said user identifying means determines said user based on a predetermined instruction from an input device operated by said user at said user terminal, and said level determining means determines that the certification level is the lowest.

6. (Amended) A user information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, if a current certification level of the user is lower than a desired certification level required for data acquisition, said transmission control means instructs the user to take action required to level up to the required certification level.

7. (Amended) A user information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said transmission control means has means for defining a security level specific to said user information and means for managing said user information for said each security level.

8. (Amended) A user information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the apparatus is arranged to hold, in the storage means, information common to a plurality of users who use the user terminals as group data to be associated with a security level.

9. (Amended) A user information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein, for a set of requested data, an index as an ID is obtained from a distance between a probability of such an event and data, and then, the obtained value is used to reconfirm a security.

10. (Amended) A user information management apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the apparatus is arranged so that said plurality of user terminals are classified in advance into a plurality of security divisions, and security division determining means is provided, thereby applying access restriction for such each security division of the user terminal that has made access.

14. (Amended) A user information management apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said transmission control means further comprises a user information use criterion storing means for storing a user information use criterion for a data requester in advance and a user information providing condition storing means for storing a user information providing condition for a data provider in advance, and, when the user information use criterion and the user information providing condition are compared with each other, and transmission is controlled based on the comparison result, if user information other than that on a user determined by the user determination means is contained in data, the user information providing condition of the user is obtained, and comparison with the user information use criterion is carried out, thereby determining whether or not transmission is carried out.

18. (Amended) A user information management method according to claim 15, wherein said level determining step determines a predetermined technique employed by the user for the purpose of user identification, thereby determining a level.

19. (Amended) A user information management method according to claim 15, wherein said user identifying step determines said user based on a predetermined instruction from an input device operated by said user at said user terminal, and, in this case, said level determining step determines that the certification level is the lowest.

20. (Amended) A user information management method according to claim 15, wherein, if a current certification level of the user is lower than a desired certification level required for data acquisition, said transmission control step instructs the user to take action required to level up to the required certification level.

21. (Amended) A user information management method according to claim 15, wherein said transmission control step has the step of defining a security level specific to said user information and the step of managing said user information for said each security level.

22. (Amended) A user information management method according to claim 15, wherein the method is arranged to hold, in the storage step, information common to a plurality of users who use the user terminals as group data to be associated with a security level.

23. (Amended) A user information management method according to claim 15, wherein the method comprises the step of obtaining, for a set of requested data, an index as an ID from a distance between a probability of such an event and data, and then using the obtained value to reconfirm a security.

24. (Amended) A user information management method according to claim 15, wherein the method is arranged so that said plurality of user terminals are classified in advance into a plurality of security divisions, and security division determining step is provided, thereby applying access restriction for such each security division of the user terminal that has made access.

28. (Amended) A user information management method according to claim 15, wherein, a user information use criterion for a data requester is stored in advance, and a user information providing condition for a data provider is stored in advance, and when the transmission control step further compares the user information use criterion and the user information providing condition with each other, so that transmission is controlled based on the comparison result, if user information other than that on a user determined by the user determination means is contained in data, the user information providing condition of the user is obtained, and comparison with the user information use criterion is carried out, thereby determining whether or not transmission is carried out.

32. (Amended) A recording medium having recorded in a computer readable state a control program for executing the user information management method according to claim 29, wherein said level determining step determines a predetermined technique employed by the user for the purpose of user identification, thereby determining a level.

33. (Amended) A recording medium having recorded in a computer readable state a control program for executing the user information managing method according to claim 29, wherein said user identifying step determines said user based on a predetermined instruction from an input device operated by said user at said user terminal, and, in this case, said level determining step determines that the certification level is the lowest.

34. (Amended) A recording medium having recorded in a computer readable state a control program for executing the user information managing method according to claim 29, wherein, if a current certification level of the user is lower than a desired certification level required for data acquisition, said transmission control step instructs the user to take action required to level up to the required certification level.

35. (Amended) A recording medium having recorded in a computer readable state a control program for executing the user information managing method according to claim 29, wherein said transmission control step has the step of defining a security level specific to said user information and the step of managing said user information for said each security level.

36. (Amended) A recording medium having recorded in a computer readable state a control program for executing the user information managing method according to claim 29, wherein the recording medium is arranged to hold, in the storage step, information common to a plurality of users who use the user terminals as group data to be associated with a security level.

37. (Amended) A recording medium having recorded in a computer readable state a control program for executing the user information managing method according to claim 29, wherein the recording medium is arranged so that, for a set of requested data, an index as an ID is obtained from a distance between a probability of such an event and data, and then, the obtained value is used to reconfirm a security.

38. (Amended) A recording medium having recorded in a computer readable state a control program for executing the user information managing method according to claim 29, wherein the recording medium is arranged so that said plurality of user terminals are classified in advance into a plurality of security divisions, and security division determining step is provided, thereby applying access restriction for such each security division of the user terminal that has made access.

42. (Amended) A recording medium having recorded in a computer readable state a control program for executing the user information managing method according to claim 29, wherein the recording medium is arranged so that, a user information use criterion for a data requester is stored in advance, and a user information providing condition for a data provider is stored in advance, and when the user information use criterion and the user information providing condition are compared with each other, and transmission is controlled based on the comparison result, if user information other than that on a user determined by the user determination means is contained in data, the user information providing condition of the user is obtained, and comparison with the user information use criterion is carried out, thereby determining whether or not transmission is carried out.